Imbedding Cultural Sensitivity in the Writing Curriculum

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Culture

noun

1. The arts, beliefs, customs, institutions, and other products of human work and thought considered as a unit, especially with regard to a particular time or social group.

2. These arts, beliefs, and other products considered with respect to a particular subject or mode of expression.

3. The set of predominating attitudes and behavior that characterize a group or organization.
Even finding common language is a struggle

- Underrepresented population
- Non-majority
- Non-white
- Minority
- Protected class
- Diverse
- Inclusive
generally:

- Race
- Ethnicity
- Gender
- Sexual orientation
- Socioeconomic background
- Religion
- Disability or other-abled
- Age
Natural resistance

- I’m afraid I’ll say the wrong thing
- I don’t have the protection
- I’d rather leave well enough alone

- But, . . .
Student experience

I, too, am Harvard

http://itooamharvard.tumblr.com/

UCLA “33”

http://colorlines.com/archives/2014/02/how_does_it_feel_to_be_a_black_student_at_ucla_law_school_video.html
### Census Data: Race & Ethnicity – Licensed Lawyers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race/Ethnicity</th>
<th>2000</th>
<th>2010</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>88.8%</td>
<td>88.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>4.2%</td>
<td>4.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>3.4%</td>
<td>3.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian Pacific</td>
<td>2.2%</td>
<td>3.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native American</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native Hawaiian</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How to imbed cultural sensitivity

- Recognize our own biases
- Educate ourselves
- Be purposeful in course construction
Recognize Our Own Bias

- I don’t have a racist/sexbist/biased bone in my body

- Are you sure?
Recognize Our Own Bias

- Harvard’s implicit bias work

- https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/
Educate ourselves:

- Learn from our students
- Pay attention to the data
- Know the current issues students face
- Bias has not been eradicated!
How to Embed in Course:

- Client simulations: legal issues

  - Clients: of varying backgrounds – age, gender, race, ethnicity, socioeconomic background, disability

  - Students work in groups to identify issues clients could face, in addition to the obvious legal issue
Problems:

- Cross-racial bias
- Implicit bias research
Hypotheticals

- Judges
- Parties— not stereotypical roles or if they are, address it!
- Positions of power
other considerations

- Guest speakers, mentors, consultants
- Examples